

Mandatory Reporter Training and Certification Workgroup

Minutes

Monday, October 22, 2018

Welcome & Introductions:

Janee Harvey from the Department of Human Services (DHS) welcomed everyone, reviewed the agenda and workgroup introductions were done.

Members attending were: Janee Harvey, Roxanne Riesberg, Eric Heitz, Karin Ford, Bret Braafhart, Sonya Streit, Ben Mulford, Katy Lang, Amy Carpenter, Joni Klaassen, Kerstin Marnin, Liz Cox, Representative Marti Anderson and Senator Herman Quirmbach.

Revisit Workgroup Charter – Purpose, Goals and Deliverables:

Janee reviewed the workgroup charter and emphasized that the objective for the meeting was to develop strategies for improving mandatory reporter training and certification requirements for child abuse and dependent adult abuse. She reminded the workgroup that the recommendations for proposed improvements would be captured in a report drafted for their review and feedback within the next couple of weeks and due for final submission by the workgroup in December. She also informed that the final report would also be posted to the DHS workgroup webpage, which is available to the public.

Discussion and consideration of proposed workgroup recommendations:

Meeting materials included a document entitled “Mandatory Training and Certification Workgroup Recommendations”. Janee Harvey reviewed the three formal recommendations from the document, which were a result of the presentations and discussion from the September workgroup meeting. Each of the following recommendations were discussed by the workgroup with an opportunity for public comment with each individual recommendation:

- a) Require all mandatory reporters (as defined in Iowa Code sections 232.69 and 235B.3) to take a training created and produced by the Department of Human Services (DHS) and allow specialty fields to provide supplemental training in addition to the core DHS Mandatory training.
- b) Require mandatory reporter training for child abuse and dependent adult abuse to be two separate, two-hour trainings.
- c) Require mandatory reporter training frequency to increase from once every 5 years to every 3 years.

Following discussion of the recommendations, Janee Harvey moved to vote for each recommendation individually. All voting workgroup members present voted in favor of the first recommendation. All except for one voting workgroup member present voted in favor of the second and third recommendations. While the legislative members present were ex officio, nonvoting members, they did express their support for all three of the recommendations.

Discussion and consideration of additional recommendations:

Some concern arose around a bill the DHS informed they had pre-filed to eliminate the requirement of the written mandatory reporter form. Roxanne Riesberg (with the DHS) shared that rather than rely on the information on a form, the Child Protection Worker was now required to call the mandatory reporter to ensure they understood all of the concerns reported and ask any additional questions they had. This was always best practice, but is now required. Janee Harvey added that this change came after reviewing data that confirmed the written mandatory reporter forms were not an added benefit, especially for all of the time it takes for mandatory reporter to complete. In all of the cases reviewed, an intake decision was changed in less than 1%. The new mandate to call to the mandatory reporter eased the concerns workgroup members had.

Public Comment:

Representatives from the Iowa Hospital Association expressed their concerns with the increased costs for hospitals associated with the increased frequency for training, the two separate two-hour trainings, and utilizing training created and produced by the DHS. Workgroup members inquired where cost was coming from and offered potential solutions and cost saving strategies as well as a commitment to provide for as much technical solutions through the Learning Management System that are possible and affordable. Ultimately the workgroup members were adamant that the welfare of children and dependent adults outweighed the concern regarding the cost of doing business.

Next Steps:

DHS will draft a report within the next two weeks for workgroup members to review and provide feedback, assuring the report adequately captures the workgroup activities and recommendations.

The final report will be submitted to the Governor and General Assembly by December 15, 2018.

Adjourn:

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 pm. There will be no other meetings and all communication will be done electronically.